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Constructing images of Indonesia and France in Leila S. Chudori's *Home*

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Abstract: *Leila S. Chudori's Home brings Indonesia and France into a transnational narrative shaped by political exile, cultural memory, and generational difference. This study examines how the novel constructs images of the two countries and how those images organize the characters' negotiations of home and belonging. It applies a qualitative interpretive approach to the Southeast Asian edition of Home, translated by John H. McGlynn. Narrative passages, dialogue, settings, characterization, and cultural markers were collected through close reading and analyzed using Joep Leerssen's imagological concepts of auto-image, hetero-image, and the relational construction of self and other. The findings show that Indonesia is represented ambivalently as a cherished cultural homeland sustained through food, language, memory, and diasporic solidarity, yet also as a repressive state that revokes citizenship and excludes political exiles. France is constructed as a space of refuge, freedom, and intercultural recognition, but it cannot fully replace Indonesia as a symbolic home. These images also vary by generation: Indonesia is a lost homeland for Dimas, whereas for Lintang it shifts from an inherited and unfamiliar image to an experienced, critically reassessed place. The novel therefore constructs national images as relational, changeable, and contested rather than fixed national characteristics.*

Keywords: *imagology, national images, transnational literature, political exile, Home*

INTRODUCTION

Literary narratives that cross national borders do more than relocate characters from one country to another. They also produce comparative images of places, peoples, and political communities. These images influence how characters interpret belonging, how readers understand cultural difference, and how the idea of a nation is made emotionally meaningful. In narratives of exile, the relation between countries becomes especially complex because the homeland may remain the primary object of attachment even when it has excluded its citizens, while the host country may provide safety without becoming an unquestioned home. The literary representation of exile therefore creates a productive field for imagology, which studies the textual construction of national and cultural images rather than treating national character as an objective fact (Beller & Leerssen, 2007; Leerssen, 2007).

Leila S. Chudori's *Home* is particularly relevant to this problem. The novel is John H. McGlynn's English translation of *Pulang*, first published in Indonesian in 2012. Its narrative moves between Indonesia and France and connects the aftermath of the 1965 political violence with the political transition of May 1998. Dimas Suryo and other Indonesian journalists are unable to return after their passports are revoked. They eventually establish Tanah Air Restaurant in Paris, where cuisine, literature, art, and social gatherings enable them to maintain an Indonesian cultural world outside

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Indonesia. The second generation, especially Dimas's daughter Lintang, encounters Indonesia differently. She grows up in France with fragmented accounts of her father's country and later travels to Jakarta, where inherited images are tested against direct experience. In this way, *Home* places Indonesia and France within a single transnational field of memory, comparison, and identification.

The historical context of the novel strengthens the importance of this transnational relation. Indonesian political exiles after 1965 lived with restricted mobility, uncertain citizenship, and prolonged separation from family and homeland. Their experiences cannot be reduced to migration motivated by economic choice because exile was produced by political exclusion and by the withdrawal of state recognition (Hill, 2020, 2022). Literature by and about Indonesian exiles consequently becomes an alternative archive of experiences that official historical narratives long marginalized (Chambert-Loir, 2016). In *Home*, however, history is not represented only through scenes of persecution. It is also mediated through spatial and cultural contrasts: Jakarta and Paris, state hostility and civic refuge, inherited memory and direct experience, as well as Indonesian cultural attachment and French social life.

Existing studies have established several important dimensions of the novel. Prasasti and Suarcaya (2018) examine romanticism, nostalgia, and the meaning of home for the political exile. Other scholarship has emphasized trauma, collective memory, diaspora, nationalism, and the political facts embedded in Indonesian fiction (Efendi & Nurgiyantoro, 2021; Leksana & Subekti, 2023). Recent analysis of Lintang Utara has focused on her hybrid identity and her position between Indonesian and French cultures, explaining her identity through multiculturalism and the idea of an in-between or third space (Cahyani & Rahayu, 2026). These studies clarify the characters' psychological and cultural negotiations, but they do not make the national images of Indonesia and France themselves the central analytical object. A study of identity asks how a character becomes Indonesian, French, or hybrid; an imagological study instead asks how the text attributes meanings to Indonesia and France, who articulates those meanings, how they change across narrative perspectives, and what ideological work they perform.

This distinction is the point of departure for the present study. It asks: How does *Home* construct the images of Indonesia and France through its representations of political exile, cultural memory, and generational experience? The study argues that the two national images are produced relationally and ambivalently. Indonesia appears as a cultural homeland that the exiles continuously recreate, but also as a political state that expels, stigmatizes, and withholds recognition. France appears as a refuge that enables civic and cultural agency, yet it remains an incomplete substitute for the homeland. The opposition is not absolute. Each image changes according to the speaker, historical moment, and generation. By examining this relational structure, the study contributes to the conference theme of Indonesian literature as a citizen of world literature: *Home* translates an Indonesian history into a transnational narrative while preserving the tensions involved in representing self and other.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Imagology and the literary construction of national images

Imagology is a branch of comparative literary studies concerned with representations of national, ethnic, and cultural character. It does not determine what a nation is actually like. Instead, it examines the images through which texts make national difference recognizable and meaningful. Beller and Leerssen (2007) describe national characterization as a cultural and literary construction shaped by discursive conventions, historical circumstances, intertextual traditions, and rhetorical purposes. The object of analysis is therefore not empirical national character but an *image* or *imageme*: a cluster of attributed characteristics that becomes legible through contrast and repetition.

Leerssen (2007) stresses that such images are relational. A textual image of one nation is normally articulated in relation to another, so the representation of the foreign country also reveals the values through which the observing culture understands itself. This relationality is commonly discussed through *auto-image* and *hetero-image*. An auto-image concerns a collective representation of the self or one's own national group, whereas a hetero-image concerns a representation of another national or cultural group. The two cannot be separated neatly because the foreign other often functions as a contrast that organizes the self-image. Furthermore, the categories are dependent on perspective. Indonesia may function as an auto-image when focalized through Dimas, but it becomes partly a hetero-image for Lintang, who was born and educated in France and initially knows Indonesia through stories, books, documentary images, food, and family memory.

Leerssen (2016) also warns against reading literary images as transparent descriptions of social reality. Images are tropes and discursive constructs whose significance depends on genre, narrative voice, audience, historical moment, and intertextual context. They may be positive, negative, or ambivalent, and apparently contradictory attributes can coexist. This concept of ambivalence is crucial for *Home*. Indonesia is not simply idealized as a beautiful homeland or condemned as a violent state. It is simultaneously an intimate cultural origin and a political order that denies the exiles' return. France is not merely celebrated as free and modern; it is a place where the exiles can act and be recognized, but also the space in which the permanence of their separation becomes visible.

Imagological analysis therefore proceeds through several related questions. First, what national attributes and associations recur in narrative descriptions, dialogue, settings, and cultural symbols? Second, whose perspective produces the image? Third, what contrastive relation connects self and other? Fourth, what historical and ideological circumstances make that representation meaningful? Finally, what narrative function does the image perform? In *Home*, these questions make it possible to move beyond a catalogue of Indonesian and French cultural elements. Food, passports, restaurants, political events, and urban locations are analyzed as components of a changing system of national representation.

Exile, memory, and transnational perspective

Although imagology is the sole theoretical framework employed here, research on exile and cultural memory provides the historical and interpretive context for

understanding the images found in the novel. Indonesian political exile after 1965 resulted from the interaction of Cold War polarization, state classification, and the withdrawal of citizenship documents (Hill, 2020). Exiles living abroad were separated from their families and denied an uncomplicated return, while the meaning of Indonesia continued to be negotiated through political commitment, cultural practice, and memory (Hill, 2022). This condition creates a split between nation as cultural community and state as political institution, a distinction central to the auto-image of Indonesia in *Home*.

Cultural memory is not a passive storehouse of the past. It selects, organizes, and repeatedly reconstructs the past in forms that sustain collective identity (Assmann, 2011). Tanah Air Restaurant is significant in this respect because it materializes memory through taste, language, hospitality, literary discussion, and shared space. The restaurant creates an image of Indonesia in Paris that is neither identical with the Indonesian state nor reducible to private nostalgia. It is a diasporic cultural construction produced in interaction with French customers, intellectual life, and urban society. Belonging is consequently negotiated through social relations and practices rather than secured only by territory or legal citizenship (Yuval-Davis, 2011).

Transnational literary perspective also complicates the boundary between origin and destination. Diasporic narratives frequently represent home asynchronously: the remembered country, the present country, and the imagined possibility of return do not occupy the same temporal frame (Vicera, 2021). *Home* intensifies this temporal disjunction by juxtaposing memories of 1965, years of life in Paris, and Lintang's journey during the upheaval of 1998. Indonesia and France are thus not stable backgrounds. They are narrative images revised through memory, comparison, translation, and encounter. Imagology enables these revisions to be treated as a dynamic relation between national images rather than as evidence of fixed cultural essence.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative interpretive design to examine the construction of national images in a literary text. The primary source is the Southeast Asian edition of Leila S. Chudori's *Home*, translated from Indonesian by John H. McGlynn and published by Lontar in 2015. Using the English translation is methodologically relevant because the research addresses the transnational circulation of Indonesian literature as well as the novel's representation of Indonesia and France. All direct quotations and page references are taken consistently from this edition.

The data consist of words, metaphors, dialogue, narrative passages, descriptions of setting, character focalization, and cultural markers that attribute meanings to Indonesia or France. Data collection involved repeated close reading and note-taking. Passages were selected purposely when they met at least one of four criteria: they explicitly named or evaluated a country; contrasted Indonesian and French spaces or practices; associated national belonging with citizenship, memory, food, language, or political freedom; or showed a change in a character's perception of either country. Context surrounding each passage was retained to avoid separating a national image from its narrator, historical moment, or narrative function.

Analysis followed qualitative content analysis through coding, categorization, comparison, and interpretation (Schreier, 2012). Initial codes included homeland,

exclusion, statelessness, cultural memory, refuge, civic freedom, cultural recognition, inherited image, direct encounter, and generational perspective. The codes were then organized through Leerssen's imagological framework into auto-images, hetero-images, and changes in the self-other relation. Comparison across characters and time periods was used to identify recurrent attributes as well as contradictions. Interpretive validity was strengthened through repeated checking of each category against the full narrative context, examination of negative or ambivalent cases, and explicit differentiation between textual representation and empirical claims about Indonesia or France. Thus, the analysis does not claim that either country possesses the characteristics represented in the novel; it explains how *Home* constructs and mobilizes those images.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The analysis identifies three interconnected patterns in the construction of national images in Leila S. Chudori's Home. First, Indonesia is represented through an ambivalent auto-image that juxtaposes cultural belonging with political exclusion. Second, France emerges as a hetero-image of refuge, cultural expression, and public recognition, although it remains an incomplete substitute for the homeland. Third, the relationship between these national images shifts across generations, reflecting differences in cultural familiarity, historical memory, and direct experience. These patterns demonstrate that national images are constructed relationally rather than through fixed or mutually exclusive national characteristics. Table 1 summarizes the principal findings and their interpretations within Leerssen's imagological framework.

Table 1. Main Patterns of National Image Construction in Home

Main Pattern	Textual Evidence	Imagological Interpretation
Indonesia as an ambivalent homeland	Political repression, passport revocation, and prohibited return coexist with cultural memory, solidarity, and the establishment of Tanah Air Restaurant (Chudori, 2015, pp. ix, 4, 67, 79, 99–102).	An ambivalent auto-image in which Indonesia functions simultaneously as a source of cultural belonging and a political state that excludes its own citizens.
France as refuge and incomplete home	Paris provides opportunities for employment, cultural activities, and public recognition, particularly through Tanah Air Restaurant (Chudori, 2015, pp. 99–102, 122).	A relational hetero-image associating France with refuge and cultural recognition without replacing Indonesia as a symbolic homeland.
Generational transformation of national images	Dimas remembers Indonesia as a lost homeland, whereas Lintang reassesses inherited images through her encounters with Indonesian family and everyday cultural practices in Jakarta (Chudori, 2015, pp. 102, 378, 385).	A shifting relationship between auto-image and hetero-image, shaped by generational perspective, narrative focalization, and lived experience.

The first pattern reveals the contradictory construction of Indonesia as both a cultural homeland and an exclusionary political state. Through Dimas and the first-generation exiles, Indonesia remains an object of emotional attachment despite the withdrawal of formal citizenship and restrictions on return. Metaphors of cleansing and

disappearance, passport revocation, and Dimas's inability to return for his mother's death construct a negative political image associated with repression and exclusion (Chudori, 2015, pp. ix, 4, 67, 79). Nevertheless, this political representation coexists with a positive cultural image sustained through food, language, memory, and solidarity. The establishment of Tanah Air Restaurant in Paris recreates an Indonesian cultural space beyond national territory (Chudori, 2015, pp. 99–102). These contrasting representations produce an ambivalent auto-image in which attachment to the nation persists despite exclusion by the state.

The second pattern constructs France as a place of refuge, cultural expression, and public recognition. Paris provides opportunities for the Indonesian exiles to work, establish social relationships, and participate in cultural activities that sustain their collective identity. Tanah Air Restaurant becomes particularly significant because it accommodates culinary traditions, intellectual discussions, and artistic exchanges (Chudori, 2015, pp. 99–101). Its subsequent recognition as Indonesia's "true cultural ambassador in Paris" demonstrates how cultural representation can acquire legitimacy outside the political boundaries of the homeland (Chudori, 2015, p. 122). Within the imagological framework, France functions primarily as a hetero-image constructed in relation to Indonesia's political exclusion. However, its positive representation remains qualified by the exiles' continuing emotional attachment to Indonesia. France enables cultural participation and public visibility without fully replacing the symbolic significance of the homeland.

The third pattern demonstrates the generational transformation of national images through the contrasting perspectives of Dimas and Lintang. For Dimas, Indonesia constitutes an auto-image shaped by personal memory, cultural belonging, and forced political exile, whereas France emerges as a hetero-image associated with refuge and adaptation. Lintang, by contrast, grows up in France and initially constructs her understanding of Indonesia through family narratives, cultural practices, and inherited memories rather than direct experience. Indonesia thus occupies an ambivalent position as both an ancestral homeland and a relatively unfamiliar cultural space. Her subsequent journey to Jakarta challenges these inherited representations, allowing her to reassess Indonesia through encounters with its social and cultural realities, including experiences that bring her closer to her Indonesian heritage (Chudori, 2015, p. 378). This transition from mediated knowledge to lived experience illustrates that national images are neither fixed nor uniformly transmitted across generations. Instead, the relationship between auto-image and hetero-image shifts according to narrative focalization, historical circumstances, and the characters' positions within transnational experience.

Taken together, these findings demonstrate that Home does not assign exclusively positive characteristics to France or negative characteristics to Indonesia. Cultural Indonesia is continuously reconstructed within French society, while the representation of France as a refuge derives its significance from the political exclusion experienced by Indonesian exiles. The generational contrast further reveals that these national images are neither fixed nor uniformly inherited. Instead, they remain relational, ambivalent, and subject to reinterpretation through memory, cultural encounters, and historical experience.

Discussion

Indonesia as cultural homeland and exclusionary state

The strongest feature of Indonesia's image is its internal contradiction. Through Dimas and the first-generation exiles, Indonesia functions as an auto-image because it is the community with which they identify. Yet the image is divided between cultural attachment and political rejection. The opening language of the novel presents the violence of state classification through a metaphor of purification: "Three years ago, the Nusantara News agency where I worked was cleansed of lice and germs like myself. The army was the disinfectant and we disappeared, with no trace left" (Chudori, 2015, p. ix). Imagologically, this passage does more than describe persecution. It constructs a negative political image of Indonesia through a national discourse that divides legitimate citizens from contaminating outsiders. The collective "we" is produced as an internal other, even though its members understand Indonesia as their own nation.

The construction is intensified when association becomes sufficient grounds for persecution. Dimas recalls that anyone believed to be connected to the Indonesian Communist Party through family, friendship, professional relations, or neighborhood proximity could be "hunted down, detained, and interrogated" (Chudori, 2015, p. 4). The national community is represented here as regulated by expanding suspicion. Rather than treating Indonesian identity as shared citizenship, the state image reorganizes it through ideological eligibility. This is why the novel's auto-image is not simply self-celebratory. A national self can criticize the political institutions that claim to define the nation.

Passport revocation makes the division between cultural nation and political state explicit. Dimas explains that "our passports were revoked and we became, in an instant, a band of stateless people with no fixed identity" (Chudori, 2015, p. 67). The abruptness of "in an instant" emphasizes the power of documentation to alter a person's public relation to the nation without erasing emotional or cultural attachment. Indonesia continues to organize the exiles' memories and practices after the state has withdrawn formal recognition. In Leerssen's terms, the image is ambivalent because opposite attributes remain active: Indonesia is simultaneously the source of belonging and the agent of statelessness.

The prohibition on return transforms national image into a personal and familial experience. When Dimas wishes to pay his last respects to his mother, he is warned: "Enter Indonesia? Impossible! You cannot enter Indonesia with a titre de voyage. And even if you were able to, there's a very good chance you'd never be able to leave that place again" (Chudori, 2015, p. 79). The name Indonesia in this passage signifies a closed political territory rather than an accessible homeland. The impossibility of return is particularly painful because the cultural image of home remains intact. The affective force of the scene depends on the gap between the nation Dimas loves and the state border he cannot cross.

Administrative stigma extends this negative political image inside Indonesia. Former political prisoners carry the designation *ET* on identification cards, while journalists may need pseudonyms to work (Chudori, 2015, pp. 126–127). The novel thereby presents exclusion as more than a past episode. It becomes a system of continuing classification that decides who may participate visibly in national life. This aspect of the representation resonates with scholarship on the lasting contest over

victimhood and national identity after the 1965 violence (Wicaksono, 2021). It also explains why the image of Indonesia remains historically divided rather than resolved by nostalgia.

Nevertheless, political exclusion does not exhaust the Indonesian auto-image. The exiles reconstruct another Indonesia through cultural practice. Their decision to establish a restaurant begins with the declaration, "We are going to open an Indonesian restaurant in Paris!" (Chudori, 2015, p. 9). The restaurant is planned not only as a commercial site but also as a place for books, films, art, and social exchange (Chudori, 2015, p. 101). Most significantly, Dimas responds to its name: "Tanah Air. Homeland. The name immediately stole my heart" (Chudori, 2015, p. 102). The translation embedded in the phrase connects Indonesian cultural vocabulary with a wider readership, while its emotional effect reveals that home has become portable but not replaceable.

Tanah Air Restaurant produces a counter-image of Indonesia. Against the state image of ideological contamination, it associates Indonesia with cuisine, creativity, hospitality, discussion, and community. This image is not generated within Indonesian territory but in Paris, through interaction with French society and international visitors. The restaurant consequently demonstrates Leerssen's principle that national images are relational constructions. The Indonesian self-image is intensified, translated, and reshaped in the presence of a foreign audience. Cultural Indonesia becomes visible precisely where political Indonesia attempted to make the exiles disappear.

This finding extends previous readings of nostalgia and home. Prasasti and Suarcaya (2018) rightly identify the importance of longing and the significance of home, but an imagological reading shows that nostalgia also performs public and comparative work. It constructs an alternative national image in the host country. Likewise, cultural memory does not reproduce an unchanged Indonesia. As Assmann (2011) suggests, memory reconstructs identity under new historical conditions. The restaurant selects particular elements—taste, artistic expression, intellectual exchange, and solidarity—and turns them into a diasporic image capable of contesting the state's exclusionary definition of the nation.

France as refuge, cultural space, and incomplete home

France is mainly focalized as the host country, making it a hetero-image for Dimas and the first-generation Indonesian exiles. Its representation emerges less through generalized statements about French national character than through opportunities made possible in Paris. The characters can work, organize, establish Tanah Air Restaurant, hold discussions, screen films, display photographs, and interact with intellectuals. France is therefore constructed institutionally and spatially as an enabling environment. It gives the exiles room to create a public cultural identity after they have lost legal recognition from Indonesia.

The image of France is indirectly contrasted with the Indonesian state's control of visibility. In Indonesia, political labels restrict movement and professional participation; in Paris, the restaurant permits association and cultural expression. This contrast does not mean that the novel claims all of France is uniformly free or all of Indonesia uniformly repressive. Imagology treats the contrast as a narrative function: Paris becomes the space through which the consequences of Indonesian exclusion can

be seen, while Indonesian cultural activity gives meaning to the freedom available in Paris.

Public recognition is a decisive part of the French image. When Indonesian academics visit the restaurant, they are impressed by its crowded dining room, book discussions, and photographic exhibitions. An article later describes Tanah Air as Indonesia's "true cultural ambassador in Paris" (Chudori, 2015, p. 122). The phrase reverses the official relation between citizen and nation. Those denied return are recognized abroad as representing Indonesian culture. France thus operates as a third space of public judgment where an alternative account of Indonesian belonging becomes possible. The host country does not grant the exiles their Indonesian identity; rather, it provides conditions in which they can perform and receive recognition for an identity the Indonesian state has delegitimized.

At the same time, France is not idealized as a complete replacement for home. The very success of Tanah Air Restaurant preserves evidence of displacement. Its name, menu, activities, and community continually refer elsewhere. Paris is livable and productive, but the characters' cultural labor reveals a continuing desire for Indonesia. France's positive image is therefore qualified by emotional incompleteness. It offers refuge without erasing exile, safety without restoring citizenship, and recognition without resolving the right of return.

This ambivalence distinguishes the present interpretation from a binary reading of homeland and hostland. If France were simply home and Indonesia simply danger, the exiles would have no reason to name their institution Tanah Air or to sustain Indonesian cultural life so intensely. Conversely, if Indonesia were only a beloved homeland, the narrative would not foreground passport revocation, prohibited return, and administrative stigma. The two images depend on one another: France's hospitality reveals Indonesia's exclusion, and the recreated Indonesian homeland gives cultural purpose to life in France.

The hetero-image of France also changes as Indonesian practices enter French public space. The restaurant adapts Indonesian food and hospitality to a Parisian setting and brings together Indonesian exiles, French patrons, artists, students, and visiting intellectuals. France is therefore not represented as an untouched national essence but as a site of intercultural encounter. This representation supports Leerssen's (2016) view that ethnicity and national difference in literature function through shifting discursive relations rather than stable descriptions. Paris becomes meaningful through what the characters do there, just as the image of Indonesia changes when it is reconstructed abroad.

Generational shifts in self and other

The contrast between Dimas and Lintang demonstrates that auto-image and hetero-image are positions, not permanent labels attached to countries. For Dimas, Indonesia is the national self even after the state declares him an outsider. France is the foreign environment in which he gradually establishes a life. His image of Indonesia is grounded in lived memory and loss; his image of France is grounded in refuge and adaptation. The emotional hierarchy remains uneven because France enables survival but Indonesia retains the name of homeland. This generational distinction resonates with Baser and Toivanen's (2024) findings that diasporic memories and attachments to

the homeland are not simply reproduced across generations but continually reinterpreted in relation to experiences within the host society.

Lintang's perspective reverses this configuration. Born to an Indonesian father and French mother and raised in France, she knows French language, education, and social life directly. Indonesia initially reaches her through the memories of her father and his friends, objects and food at Tanah Air Restaurant, books, documentary material, political arguments, and incomplete family stories. Research on intergenerational memory in conflict-generated diasporas demonstrates that younger generations develop relationships with ancestral histories through narratives transmitted within families and diasporic communities (Féron, 2024). What functions as auto-image for Dimas partly functions as hetero-image for Lintang. Indonesia is genealogically intimate but experientially distant.

This difference explains why Lintang should not be treated only as evidence of hybrid identity. The earlier study by Cahyani and Rahayu (2026) shows how she negotiates Indonesian and French inheritance within an in-between identity. The imagological question is different: how does her position alter the image of each country? Through Lintang, France becomes the familiar point from which Indonesia is interpreted, while Indonesia becomes an object of inquiry whose inherited image must be tested. Her movement to Jakarta changes the basis of national representation from mediated knowledge to direct encounter.

The Jakarta journey does not simply confirm the nostalgic image preserved by Dimas. Lintang encounters Indonesia during the violence and political instability of May 1998. The nation becomes sensorially and ethically immediate, but it also remains contradictory: attachment grows alongside recognition of continuing violence and racialized exclusion. Her experience therefore neither rejects her father's Indonesia nor accepts it unchanged. It revises the inherited image through observation. Zolkos (2024) demonstrates how literary representations of intergenerational trauma can illuminate the changing relationship between inherited historical experiences and subsequent generations. Although her analysis addresses a different literary and historical context, it provides a useful comparative perspective on Lintang's reinterpretation of her father's memories. This generational revision shows that national images in the novel are historically mobile.

France also changes through Lintang's perspective. For the first generation, France is hostland; for Lintang, it is the everyday world from which family differences are perceived. Consequently, the self-other relation is no longer a simple opposition between Indonesian self and French other. It becomes a triangular relation among Dimas's remembered Indonesia, Lintang's familiar France, and the Indonesia she encounters in 1998. This structure is one of the novel's most important transnational achievements because it allows the same country to be self, other, and contested inheritance depending on narrative position.

The generational structure also clarifies why the English translation matters to the study. Home presents Indonesian history to readers who may occupy a position comparable, though not identical, to Lintang's initial distance: Indonesia is approached through mediated narrative. McGlynn's translation carries culturally specific terms such as Tanah Air into English while often providing semantic bridges such as "Homeland." Orsini (2025) highlights how the predominance of English in global literary circulation

creates unequal conditions of visibility for non-Anglophone literary traditions. Read in this context, the English translation of Home makes an Indonesian historical narrative accessible across linguistic boundaries while retaining culturally specific meanings that cannot be reduced to English-language categories. The text thus participates materially in world literature, not by abandoning Indonesian history but by making its national images available for reinterpretation across linguistic and cultural borders.

The findings demonstrate that Home resists national essentialism. Neither Indonesia nor France is assigned a single, stable character. Their images are constructed through political institutions, personal memory, cultural practice, urban space, narrative focalization, and historical change. The novel's imagological complexity lies in its ability to sustain contradiction: a homeland can exclude; a foreign country can shelter; a restaurant abroad can represent a culture more inclusively than the state; and a second-generation character can inherit a national image only to revise it through experience. These contradictions make the novel a productive example of Indonesian literature functioning within a transnational and world-literary field.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that *Home* constructs Indonesia and France through an unequal but mutually constitutive relation. Indonesia is represented through an ambivalent auto-image. It is the cultural homeland sustained by language, cuisine, memory, artistic activity, and solidarity, while it is simultaneously the political state that revokes passports, classifies citizens, and prevents exiles from returning. France is constructed mainly as a hetero-image of refuge, civic possibility, cultural exchange, and public recognition. Yet its enabling character does not allow it to replace Indonesia fully as a symbolic home. The significance of each image emerges from its contrast with and incorporation of the other.

The generational comparison further demonstrates that national images are positional and changeable. Dimas remembers Indonesia as a lost home and experiences France as hostland. Lintang begins with France as her familiar social world and Indonesia as an inherited but partially foreign image. Her encounter with Jakarta revises, rather than simply confirms, the version of Indonesia transmitted by the first generation. Auto-image and hetero-image consequently shift with focalization, experience, and historical time.

These findings contribute to the imagological study of transnational literature by showing that national images need not take the form of simple stereotypes. In *Home*, they are produced through contradictions among culture, state, citizenship, memory, and place. The novel also demonstrates how Indonesian literature enters world literature: the English translation carries a nationally specific history into international circulation while retaining the contested meanings of homeland and foreign refuge. Future research can extend this analysis by comparing the Indonesian and English editions to examine how translation choices reshape national images, or by comparing *Home* with other Southeast Asian narratives of political exile.

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